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L E T T E R

FROM

Captain JOSEPH PRICE,

TO

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PHILIP FRANCIS, *Esq;*

LATE A MEMBER

OF THE

Supreme Council at Bengal.

To be had of J. STOCKDALE, No. 181, Piccadilly, and J. SEWELL, Cornhill.

1701

[Price One Shilling.]

L E T T E R

FROM

JOSEPH PRIDE

TO

PHILIP FRANCIS, ESQ.

21 R.

L A T E A M E M B E R

THE Desire of doing me that Mischief in Europe which you talked of doing in India, induced you to permit to remain on the Faces of the East India Company's Records, Personal Reflections relating to me, which are false, malicious, and groundless; and which no Man, who has the least Pretensions to the Character of a Gentleman, would have suffered to remain, after he had comprehended a third Person to be the Reflections in his Name. Several Councils.

On the Day I was to leave Calcutta for Europe, a Gentleman informed me, that it was commonly talked of in Town, that Mr. Philip Francis had made very severe Reflections on my Character.

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S I R,

THE Desire of doing me that Mischief in Europe which you failed of doing in India, induced you to permit to remain on the Face of the East India Company's Records, Personal Reflections relating to me, which are false, malicious, and groundless; *and which no Man, who has the least Pretensions to the Character of a Gentleman, would have suffered to remain, after he had commissioned a third Person, to retract the Assertions in his Name.*

On the Day I was to leave Calcutta for Europe, a Gentleman informed me, that it was commonly talked of in Town, that Mr. Philip Francis had made very severe Reflections on my

Character and Conduct, in a Minute which a few Days before he had delivered in at the Council Board.—The Particulars I knew not, nor had I a Right to controvert your Sentiments of my Conduct as an Officer acting under the Orders of the Board (of which you were a Member,) whilst you adhered to Truth in your Remarks, and avoided Personality.—My Time was very short—I had no Means of obtaining a Copy of your Minute, nor knew I clearly what your Observations led to.—In this Situation I accidentally met with your particular Friend, Mr. Shore,—to him I related what I had heard, and acquainted him that I had no Inducement to go to Europe, but under the Hope that the Certificate which I had received from the Assignees appointed by my general Creditors, might induce the Claimants at Home, to sign the Deeds of my general Surrender and Release, as all those in India had done; and to obtain from the East India Company some permanent Appointment in their Employment abroad, in Consideration of the many Services rendered them by myself and Family, in the long Course of Thirty Years Residence at their

several

several Presidencies in India.—That if any Position in your Minute, led directly to injure me in either of those two Points, or reflected on my Conduct as a Man of Honour, or as an Officer, I would not quit the Kingdom until you had retracted your Assertions.

Mr. Shore voluntarily proposed waiting on you on the Subject, with a Kindness which implied a Desire to serve both Parties, and the next Morning I received a Letter from him, which informed me, that in the Course of a late Debate at the Board, you had used some Expressions, for which you had no Authority, but that on Mr. Barwell and the Governor General's observing that such Admadvensions, grounded only on the vague Evidence of common Report were unjust, and too personal to stand as Arguments,—you had retracted them, and they were done away.

What was I to conclude from such a Letter, but that every thing which you had asserted against me, that was merely personal, or that might possibly be false, had been erased from
the

the Proceedings of the Board?—No such thing.—They were permitted to be entered up **FAIR** on the Company's Records, and three Months afterwards were transmitted to Europe.

I shall quote such Part of your Remarks as was evidently intended to injure me with the Company and my private Creditors; and answer them with Truth and Integrity; to both of which I will prove, before I close this Letter, that you have paid very little Regard.

The first of your Observations stands recorded in the following Words.

“I really do not know what Services Captain Price has performed.—I never heard that the Vessels under his Command, did any Services, or had an Opportunity to do any.”

Had this Remark of yours been dictated by the Spirit of Truth, the latter Part of it would have been Apology sufficient;—for no Man can do, what he never had an Opportunity of doing.

But

But you knew otherwise, and made the Remark in the Bitterness of Malice, contrary to positive Proof then before you, and to the internal Conviction of your own Mind.—To deny, with any Hopes of obtaining Credit, this Charge of Want of Candour in you, with Respect to me, you must prove that you had never seen nor heard of certain Letters from the King's Admiral and the Presidency of Madrais, addressed to the Governor General and Council of Bengal; in which, as I have heard, (for I never saw them) they express in the strongest Terms possible, their Approbation of the Conduct of Captains Price and Hicks, and enumerate many important Pieces of Service, which they had rendered the Company during their being on the Coast with the Ships.—It is not unlikely, considering your Education and well-known Principles, that you looked on those Letters as Matters of personal Favor, obtained by my Application to Sir Edward Vernon, and Sir Thomas Rumbold.—Almost in the Presence of those Gentlemen, I tell you, that I never did apply for them, nor did I know that such Papers existed until long after I had parted with those Gentlemen

Gentlemen on the Coast. I had the Interest of the Service at Heart, and pursued it with the Waranth of an Englishman; leaving my Actions to defend my Character, neither stooping to beg Recommendations, nor apprehending the insidious Malice of a Man, base enough to assert a Falstity with Confidence, but not brave enough to defend it; who, when he is taxed on the Spot by the Person he injures, retracts his Falshoods, and, when that Person leaves the Country, re-asserts them to the Court of Directors.

But to put it past a Doubt, that you had had Information of the effectual Services rendered by the Ships under my Command, I shall trouble you with a Copy of a Paper which I sent to the Board, soon after my Return to Bengal, in order to obviate some idle Reports, which I little thought originated from Mr. Francis.

“On the 23d of July, I received an Order from the Board, to take Charge of the Honourable Company's Ship Resolution; she was then
 B
 carrying

then on the Ways, sheathed only on one
 Side, her Main Mast sprung, Bowprit rotted,
 no Orlop Deck, no Magazine; her lower
 Deck Ports to cut out, and Twenty Carriages
 to make, for as many Eighteen Pounders.—
 On the 24th, I received another Order from
 the Board, to take Charge of the Royal Char-
 lotte,—My Knowledge of the Experience, Ac-
 tivity, and Spirit of Captain Hicks, induced
 me to recommend him to the Command of
 the Resolution; as I knew he would pay the
 necessary Attention to the Equipment of the
 Ship, whilst I prepared the Royal Charlotte;
 this latter was built for a Merchantman, had
 just arrived from a Voyage laden with six
 Hundred Tons of Salt and other Goods, all
 of which was to be taken out, before the
 Carpenters could go to Work; and she had
 much more Work to be done than the Reso-
 lution.—The Season of the Year was very
 unfavourable,—it rained almost continually,—
 nevertheless both Ships were compleatly
 fitted, well-manned, furnished with Provi-
 sion and Stores for three Months, and each
 mounted with Forty-four Pieces of Cannon,

" carrying 24, 18 and 12 Pound Balls; they
 " proceeded down the River the 28th of Au-
 " gust, left the Pilot the 10th of September,
 " and joined Commodore Sir Edward Vernon's
 " Squadron on the 30th of the same Month,
 " in Pondicherry Road; here both Ships con-
 " tinued until the 20th of October, when the
 " Place having surrendered, they were ordered
 " out on a Cruize, under the Command of
 " Captain Panton, in his Majesty's Ship Sea-
 " horse, in Quest of some French Ships which
 " had lately appeared on the Coast. After cruiz-
 " ing a Month without Success, the Royal
 " Charlotte received some Damage to the iron
 " work of her Rudder, and was obliged to put
 " into Point de Gale, where she continued se-
 " venteen Days to refit, and then put to Sea
 " on the 11th of December, and cruized be-
 " tween Dundra-head and the Basses on the
 " Coast of Zelone. On this Station she fell in
 " with the Company's Ship the Morse, and
 " after having conducted her into Point de Gale,
 " returned again to her Station, where she spoke
 " with several Country Ships, bound to the
 " Gulphs, and other Parts of India. On the

“ 3d of January she came again to Gale, with
 “ His Majesty's Ship the Asia, and Company's
 “ Ship Royal Admiral, where, giving to Cap-
 “ tain Vandeput an Account of the State of
 “ Affairs in India, and every Assistance in our
 “ Power, we returned to our former Station,
 “ and cruized until the 25th of January, when
 “ being joined by Sir Edward Vernon in His
 “ Majesty's Ship Rippon, accompanied by the
 “ Seahorse and Coventry Frigates, we returned
 “ with them, for the third Time, to Point de
 “ Gale.—The Resolution having got back
 “ from the first Cruize into Trincomalay, was
 “ from thence dispatched by Captain Marlow,
 “ into the Streights of Mallacca, to convoy
 “ over the Bombay China-Men; she accordingly
 “ cruized in the Streights until three of them
 “ arrived; with these she sailed to the West-
 “ ward, and joined the Squadron before we
 “ left the Coast of Zelone.—The whole
 “ Force being now joined, the Commodore
 “ sailed for Anjengo, where he arrived the 3d
 “ of February.—At this Place the Royal Char-
 “ lotte and Resolution continued under Com-
 “ mand of Captain Panton, with the Seahorse
 “ and

" and Coventry, until the 3d of March, and
 " having there taken on Board 25 Officers,
 " 330 Europeans, and 268 Sepoys, Lascars,
 " and Camp-followers, together with their
 " Baggage and Camp-Equipage, Tumbrils,
 " Field Pieces, &c. we proceeded to Tilli-
 " cherry, where we arrived the 15th of March.
 " — On the 27th of the same Month, the
 " French Settlement of Mahie capitulated.

" Sir Edward Vernon thinking it necessary
 " to go with the whole of the King's Squadron
 " to Bombay, left me with the Bengal Ships
 " to conduct the Army back to Madras, and
 " on the 6th of April I sailed, having on board
 " the Royal Charlotte and Resolution, Forty-
 " two Officers, 554 Rank and File of the Re-
 " giment and Corps of Artillery, 49 Servants
 " and Camp-followers, with their private Bag-
 " gage, Arms and Accoutrements; as also the
 " Battering Cannon, Mortars, Shot and Shells,
 " which had been sent round from Madras for
 " the Siege of Mahie—at the same Time sailed
 " two Transports with the Sepoys and Camp-
 " Equipage.

“ Equipage.—We arrived at Madrafs the 22d.
 “ of April without the Loss of a Man.

“ The Governor and Council then ordered
 “ the Ships to receive on board Colonel Harper
 “ and his Staff, Captain Colville with his Bat-
 “ talion of Sepoys, and Captain Jones with his
 “ Company of Artillery, 14 Officers, 57 Euro-
 “ peans, 800 Sepoys and Camp-followers, to-
 “ gether with their private and Camp Equipage,
 “ as well as Field Pieces, Ammunition, Tum-
 “ brels and Shot belonging to three other Bat-
 “ talions who were to join them.—The whole
 “ was safely landed at Mootepella, and the
 “ Ships returned into Madrafs Road the 18th of
 “ May.—The Resolution was then dispatched
 “ to Pondicherry to load Stores, and the Royal
 “ Charlotte followed on the same Service, as
 “ soon as she had landed some heavy Artillery
 “ brought round from Mahie.

“ On the 4th of July, when she was com-
 “ pletly filled with Pondicherry Stores, Advice
 “ having been received from Sir Thomas
 “ Rumbold, that there were French Cruizers
 “ off

" off the Island of Zelone, I ordered the Reso-
 " lution (which Ship had come a second Time
 " to Pondicherry for Stores) to sail directly in
 " Quest of them, and having re-landed the
 " Stores from the Royal Charlotte, followed
 " her the next Day.—We explored the whole
 " Coast of Zelone, from Point Pedro to the
 " little Baffes, looked into every Port, and
 " spoke with every Ship we saw, without hear-
 " ing of French Vessels.—We continued cruiz-
 " ing until the 26th of July, when the Morn-
 " ing Star arrived from Madrafs with Orders for
 " us to return, and we accordingly did return
 " into the Madrafs Road the 29th.—On August
 " the 4th, the Resolution sailed in Company
 " with His Majesty's Ship Seahorse, to convoy
 " the Morse Indiaman, and four Country Ships
 " through the Streights of Malacca on their
 " Way to China.—The Royal Charlotte sailed
 " the 10th of the same Month for Bengal, and
 " on the 28th, just one Year from the Time it
 " had been hoisted, her Pendant was hauled
 " down.—Such has been the Service the Bengal
 " Ships have rendered the Company in the
 " Course of the Year.

" Had

“ Had the Company been to have paid Freight
 “ to private Ships, for transporting the Troops
 “ and Stores, which the Bengal Ships so safely
 “ and expeditiously carried from Place to Place
 “ for them; it would, exclusive of Inconveni-
 “ ence, have cost them great Sums.

“ Captain Roddam received 7000 Pagodas,
 “ for carrying 500 Sepoys from Tillicherry to
 “ Madrafs.—The Bengal Ships transported at
 “ different Times, 1065 Europeans and 1117
 “ Sepoys and Camp-followers. In Transport-
 “ stowage, two of the former are deemed equal
 “ to three of the latter, so that Credit should
 “ have been given to the Bengal Ships, for
 “ transporting 2714 Sepoys, which at 7000
 “ Pagodas for 500, comes to 37,996 Pagodas
 “ or Arcot Rupees 138,685.

“ Captain Jameson received 5000 Pagodas for
 “ carrying Military Stores from Madrafs to Til-
 “ licherry, and had besides the Royal Admiral
 “ to convoy him.—The Bengal Ships trans-
 “ ported five times the same Quantity of Mil-
 “ itary Stores from one Place to another, which
 “ estimated

“ estimated at the same Rate, comes to 25,000
 “ Pagodas or Arcot Rupees 91,250.—The Ships
 “ have therefore saved the Company 229,935
 “ Arcot Rupees, in Freight only.

“ They were fitted out avowedly to support
 “ the King's Squadron—Sir Edward Vernon,
 “ on their Junction with his Ships, declared him-
 “ self fully satisfied with the State and Con-
 “ dition of the Royal Charlotte and Resolution.
 “ In his publick Letter to the Ministry, he ac-
 “ knowledges the Readiness and Activity of the
 “ Governor General and Council of Bengal, in
 “ sending him so capital and timely a Reinforce-
 “ ment.—Mr. Belcombe, the French Governor
 “ of Pondicherry, on seeing the Bengal Ships
 “ join the King's Squadron, then blocking up
 “ his Port, declared that all his Hopes of Re-
 “ lief by Sea were over, as the English Squadron
 “ had been so strongly reinforced.—The King's
 “ Commanding Officer, and the Presidency of
 “ Madras, unsolicited, vouched for the Ser-
 “ vices rendered the Publick, by the Equipment
 “ of the Royal Charlotte and Resolution.—The
 “ Service over—the Ships were reduced, with-
 “ out

" out leaving any dead Weight on the Company,
 " except taking a few of the Officers into the
 " Service as Cadets, may be deemed such.

" Let the acknowledged Services of the Ships,
 " and what they and their Stores will sell for,
 " be placed against their first Cost and Outfit,
 " and let the Sum saved to the Company by
 " their Transport Service, be set against their
 " Expences since they left Bengal, and it will
 " be found, that the Ships Royal Charlotte and
 " Resolution stand not much indebted to their
 " Owners.

That you had seen the above Paper, when
 you made the Observation of the Ships under
 my Command having rendered the Company
 no Services, is most probable; because in an-
 other Part of your Minute you say, " I am told
 " that Captain Price assisted at the Reduction of
 " Pondicherry and Mahie, and that his Ships
 " were employed in carrying Troops and Stores
 " to and fro, which in Truth is fitter Employ-
 " ment for Transports than Ships of War.

C I have

I have heard, Sir, that you were a Clerk to some military Man, at the Affair of St. Cas,—during that unfortunate Expedition you might have learnt, that when the Military and Marine Force of a State are to act in Conjunction on an Expedition where it is necessary to embark the Troops, then in that Case Ships of War are the safest and best to be employed in transporting as many of the Soldiers as they can with Safety stow; and that for such Reasons as you must know, though it did not suit your Purpose to own.—In India and in Europe, it was thought a Matter of great Importance, that the French should be driven off the Continent of India; and I maintain it for a Fact, that, but for the Seahorse and Coventry King's Ships, and the Royal Charlotte and Resolution Bengal armed Ships, the Army which marched across the Continent from the Coromandel to the Malabar Coast, could not have been transported from Anjango to Tillicherry for the Reduction of Mahie.—When that Place had capitulated, Letters were received from the Governor and Council of Madraís, couched in the most pressing Terms, to the Sea and Land Com-

Commanders, to send back the Regiment of Infantry and Corps of Artillery to the Coast.—The Bengal Ships took them on Board, with all the Officers, Battering Cannon, Tumbrels, Field Pieces, and every Particular of Military Stores, and in sixteen Days landed them safely, and without the Loss of Man, at the Presidency of Madrafs.—This was a Piece of Service that neither Influence nor Money could have effected until the next Season, had the Bengal Ships had not been at Hand to execute it.—Nor at any future Time, could Transports for the Troops, or wholesome Provision to have maintained them on the Way to Madrafs, have been procured, but at a greater Expence to the Service, than the Equipment of the Bengal Ships cost the Company.—All this, I suppose, you knew, and much more.—You had been told it, you had read of it in Variety of Forms.—But your Spleen to an Individual, induced you, not only to repeat, but to suffer to remain on the Face of the Company's Records, the abominable Untruth, “That you had never heard, “that the Ships commanded by Captain Price “had rendered the Company any Services !”

Your Question, "Did Captain Price ever fire a Gun, but in Salutes?" may be answered by another Question equally pertinent.—Did Admiral Darby, with more than twenty Sail of the Line, in sailing along the hostile Coast of France and Spain, to the Relief of Gibraltar, in the Course of that Expedition, ever fire a Gun? yet the throwing Supplies into that Garrison, as well as the taking of the Fortresses of Pondicherry and of Mahie, may be deemed publick Services, though neither the King's or Company's Ships ever fired a Gun in effecting the Relief of the one, or the Reduction of the other.

There is, Sir, in all your Remarks on this Occasion, so strong a Bias to inveterate Calumny, that I shall not thank you for the awkward Compliment, relative to my being a Man of Spirit, which seems to have been extorted from your Fears of Consequences, should I ever come to the Knowledge of your Illiberality.—You talk, Sir, "Of the enormous Expence of fitting out the Ships commanded by Captain Price, and what the Company will
" think

“ think of it, when it shall come to be stated !”
 I never had a Wish that any Part of my Conduct should be secreted.—Why, Sir, when you had this Matter fully in your Power, when it was doubly your Duty, first, as a Member of the Council, and secondly, as Inspector General of the Company’s Accounts, did you not point out some one or more Articles of enormous Expence, incurred by my Management ?—but that would have been open and fair, and I should have had an Opportunity to refute your Assertions on the Spot ;—a Thing you never intended.

This may not be an improper Place, to inform others as well as yourself, how some of your dark Proceedings have come to Light.

Towards the End of the last, and the Beginning of the present Year, a Number of anonymous Pamphlets, under various Denominations, were published on India Affairs, declared to be made up of fair and just Extracts from the Proceedings of the Governor General and Council of Bengal, &c. &c.—In these Proceedings

ceedings the most flattering Encomiums are lavished on the Abilities, the Integrity, and the unwearied Application of Mr. Philip Francis; and the utmost Scurrility and unjustifiable Abuse vented on the Governor General.—However, at length this hardy Veteran exceeded his Commission, and amongst numberless other Falsehoods, asserted roundly, that the Royal Charlotte cost the Company 57,000 Rupees in Ballasting only. This was coming to the Point.—I called upon him openly, and under my proper Signature, in a Letter to the Court of Directors, to come forward and support his Assertion;—but he and his Publications were no more heard of.—I had a Suspicion that the Author had been employed by you, and that the mutilated and partial Extracts from the Company's Books, had been obtained in India—but by what Channel, or by whose Means, was the Question.—I was personally known to, and intimately acquainted with, every one of the young Gentlemen, who, at the Time the Transactions mentioned in the Extracts alluded to, passed the Board, were Secretaries, deputy Secretaries, or Assistants, in the different Offices from

from whence such Extracts could have been obtained—but no Part of their Conduct or Character in Life would justify the most distant Suspicion or Insinuation, that any one of them would have been guilty of a Breach of Trust and Perjury, in giving Extracts from their Masters Books, and thereby betraying their Secrets, without their Knowledge, and contrary to their Orders:—But I found no kind of Difficulty in admitting into my Mind, that you might have been the Man, who, contrary to your Oath, and perhaps to your Allegiance, furnished the Materials for the above Publications.—Your general Stamp of Character, your notorious personal Enmity to the Governor General, and your impatient Ambition to obtain, what I think you never will be entrusted with, the Government of Bengal,—too plainly marked the Man, who was capable of ushering into the World, at the Expence of a Breach of the first moral Obligation, Productions infamous in the extreme;—tending to vilify the Character of a Man, whose Abilities you envy, and whose Integrity you have not the Virtue to imitate.

There

There is a Degree of Rancour to Mr. Hastings, which runs through these Productions, that induced me at first to suppose that they might have been drawn up by yourself, and my long Experience of the extensive Prevalence of your absurd and ridiculous Vanity, left me no Cause to doubt but that you had been your own Encomiast.—But there is a Chain of Ignorance in Asiatic Politicks, which pervades the digressive Parts of those wretched Productions, that made me hesitate at the Idea of their being compleatly fitted for the Press by your own Hands.—I was therefore obliged to seek for a Commentator, or at least an Editor of your Works, and I was lucky enough to find one that removed all my Doubts.

The Man I mean (for I will not prostitute the Appellation of Gentleman, to a Being who has been capable of undertaking so unworthy an Employment) lately returned from India. How he got there, is no Part of my present Business to enquire—there he has been, and resided in Bengal from August 1779, until the Month of March, 1780.—During which Time, having

no Employment in the Company's Service, or any Knowledge of, or Interest in, their Affairs, he applied for Employment to the Governor General, to Mr. Barwell, and even was extremely obliged to me.—How he has repaid it, the above false Assertion relative to the Ballasting of the Royal Charlotte, (whether of your Fabrication or of his own, I know not) will prove.—But as congenial Souls—like the Magnet and the Needle—or the Amber and the Straw, attract each other, you soon met,—and finding him a Man after your own Heart, you employed him in much dirty Work, which, to say the Truth, he has executed as well as you could have done it yourself.—In a Letter like this, which I intend for the Publick Eye, and to the Publication of which, I am impelled by a Love to Truth, and a justifiable Spirit of Resentment for unmerited Injuries offered—retracted—and again asserted. I would leave as little as possible to Conjecture, Insinuation, or Initials.—But here I am withheld from giving the Name of your Agent at full Length, in Commiseration to the Distresses of his Family, and the ruined State of his Affairs.

I know not, to the Mismanagement of which of you it ought to be placed, that an honest Man has the justifiable Pleasure to behold you entangled in that Kind of Embarrassment common enough to such a Confederacy.— You durst not jointly avouch, or jointly deny, your having purloined the Extracts from the Company's Proceedings Abroad, or the Publication of them at Home.—When you shall read the above Paragraph in Conjunction, I beg Leave to give a Hint to both.—Be cautious of trusting each other, for you Mr. A. M. accepted a Commission to publish a Falsehood against a Man to whose Humanity and Generosity you had been highly obliged; and you, Mr. Francis, uttered an Untruth against the same Man, which your Fear of Chastisement induced you to retract, though your Baseness afterwards permitted it to be entered on the Company's Proceedings.—The Nature and Tendency of this very humane Observation of Mr. Philip Francis, shall be quoted, explained, and commented on, before I close this Letter.

You

You have been pleased to say, that, "It is
 "a Fact of Publick Notoriety, that Captain
 "Price has paid his Debts, and made his For-
 "tune by his Voyage to the Coast and back
 "again."

This extraordinary Assertion having been
 made in the Presence of two Men, who were
 your Compeers, one of them who had known
 me near thirty Years, and the other twenty, re-
 probated the Absurdity and Injustice, of drag-
 ging into public Debate, the private Concerns
 of any Man.—This friendly Intimation in-
 duced you to say, "It is no Aspersions on the
 "Character of any Man, to say that he has
 "paid his Debts.—" But on the Strength of
 "Mr. Barwell's Authority, I retract that Part
 "of my Minute; as to his Fortune, I con-
 "clude it to be independent, because the Es-
 "tablishment and Advantages annexed to his
 "Command gave him the Means of making it
 "so,—because he has not lessened it by paying
 "his Debts, and because he is actually prepar-
 "ing to retire to England, which no Man in a
 "notorious State of Poverty would think of."

Is this Language, the Result of candid Diffinition and charitable Conclusion! Or the Effect of Prejudice and Personal Resentment?—If the former, why apologize for, or retract it at all?—If the latter, why, after your Passions had had Time to subside, and you were advised by a particular Friend of your own of my particular Reasons for going to Europe; why, I ask, Sir, when you knew all this, and thought proper so far to condescend as to commission your Friend to quiet my Fears, did you permit such Observations as the above, and many others, equally Personal, to remain on the Company's Records?—but you have done it, and a Gentleman, who has Claims on me as a private Person, hath sent me Copies of your Minutes for Explanation.

I shall defend myself, Sir, in the best Manner I can—and I dare your utmost Malice to refute a single Particle of what I have said, or shall say.—If, in this Defence, I mix a little Gall with my Ink, no Man, who has Sensibility enough to feel the Bitterness of an Injury aggravated to Insult, will blame my Severity of

Recri-

Reecrimination.—In two things, I promise not to follow your Example.—I shall say nothing but what I know, or most solemnly believe to be true;—any Part of which, if I am ever induced to recant, I shall never stoop to the Meanness of repeating it again.

As you indiscriminately opposed, *from a Spirit of Faction*, every Measure of Mr. Hastings's Administration——your Concurrence could not be expected in a Measure so laudable and so acceptable to the whole of the English Inhabitants of India in general, and of Calcutta in particular, as the equipping of two Forty Gun Ships, to reinforce the King's Squadron.—But the Plan itself has been applauded, and the Execution approved, by the King's Officer then in Command in India, and its Utility and actual Services pointed out by the Government of Madrafs, in a Style and Manner that would have silenced any Man but yourself——But I forget——your whole Pursuit has been to assert new Falsehoods, and not to lose Time in defending old ones.—The Ships had failed——executed every thing that could be reasonably expected

expected from them,—had returned, and were paid off.——Then it was, that you discovered that they had done Nothing during the twelve Months they were in Commiffion—that the Establishment was enormous—from which, in the Space of one Year, on a Voyage with them to the Coast, Captam Price had made his Fortune—had, or had not, paid his Debts, (for either Side of a Falshood will fuit the Purpose of inveterate Malice,) and was going to Europe,—which no Man would do, that was notoriously in a State of Poverty.

Be pleased to remember, Sir, (for you are cruelly apt to forget every thing which leads to Truth, to Honor, or to Justice) that I did not buy either of the Ships—that I fitted out but one of them, which was the Ship I commanded myself. That what marine Stores were wanted and could be found in the Company's Warehouses, were to be taken from thence,—so of military Stores, so of Provisions, and so of every thing else which the Company had of their own.—The Pay of the Captains was the very fame as had been received by the Men who

who had commanded the Ships whilst in the Merchants Service, including their Privilege. The Lieutenants had Wages calculated on the same equitable Principle, and equivalent to that paid to Officers in private Employments. — The Mates, Midshipmen, Warrant Officers, Trademen, and common Seamen, were paid exactly as Persons in similar Employments in the Company's Pilot Service. — The Allowance of Provision in the King's Service, was made the Standard for European Seamen; that for Lascars, regulated by the Custom of the Country, and all this subject to the Orders, Checks, and Controuls, by which such Expences are regulated in His Majesty's Ships of War. — Such, Sir, was the Establishment. — A Month was allowed me to prepare the Ships, but they were ready to proceed to Sea on the 26th Day. — You and Mr. Wheler accompanied the Governor General to view them. — At that Time, I heard nothing of Complaint, on the reverse, all was Commendation and Expressions of Surprise, that two such capital Ships, so fitted, so armed, and so manned, could be prepared for Sea in so short a Time, at Bengal.

With

With my Commission, I received a Letter from the Secretary, informing me, that the Governor General and Council, had thought proper to order me an Allowance of 700 Rupees per Month for my Table Expences, and that for such Stores and Provisions as it might be necessary to purchase abroad for the use of the Ships, I was permitted to draw a Commission, similar to that drawn by the several Storekeepers and Commissaries employed by the Company on Shore. The accumulated Sums allowed me for Wages, Table Allowance, and Commission, from the fitting out of the Ships, to their final Discharge, amounted to current Rupees, Thirty-six Thousand, Five Hundred, Seventy-five, Six Annas and Ten Pice, 36,575 *Sans. 10pi.*

I have not been thus circumstantial, in compliment to you, Mr. Francis: there are others who have a right to ask, and wish to know what you mean, when you assert, that, "I have admitted that He (Price) has not paid his Debts, and if he has not made his Fortune, I am sure it will appear from the immo-

"immoderate Establishment fixed for him, and
 "and the obvious Advantages attending such a
 "Command, that he might have done it: If
 "these Emoluments were thrown in his way
 "by Government, it is no Aspersions of his
 "Character, to suppose, that he availed him-
 "self of them—It never yet was imputed as
 "such, to the Commanders of his Majesty's
 "Ships.

"What the Establishment was, is fairly stated
 above—And I wish you would assist me with
 some of your Penetration to discover how it
 might be made to extend to answer all the Pur-
 poses you mention.—When you speak of avail-
 ing myself of obvious Advantages, do you mean
 defrauding the Company of their Stores, or
 cheating the People of their Provisions?—Nei-
 ther King's nor Company's Officers can draw
 any Advantages, not clearly ascertained and
 fully expressed in their Orders and Commissions,
 without a Breach of an Oath, or what is equally
 dear to an Officer, his Honor.—Against Insin-
 uations of that kind, I feel myself invulnerable,
 though they are such as might reasonably be
 E expected

expected from your Education, your Principles, and, as I shall prove, your Practice.

Man, know thyself, is a most excellent Precept, though I believe few People existing know their own Characters so imperfectly as you do yours; this may be owing to an uninterrupted Flow of good Fortune, and an immoderate Quantity of Vanity, which, together with Power, is very apt to magnify a Man's own self Importance, to a Degree of intolerable Insolence, insufferable to all around him.

Permit me now to quote a Fact, and compare it with one of yours.—When the Act of Parliament passed, which took place in Bengal, August the 1st, 1774.—General Clavering, Colonel Monson and Philip Francis, were appointed Members of the Council, and there being but two other Members, who were selected from the Company's old Servants, the three new ones being a Majority, and having the whole Power in their Hands, agreed to draw together, in all Political Measures. It happened that a Clause in the same Act which gave into their
Hands

Hands full Power over the Kingdom of Bengal, and every Sixpence of the Property in that Country of a Body of Merchants who knew them not, did at the same Time stipulate and ordain, that they, Clavering, Monson and Francis, should be paid out of the said Company's Treasury at Bengal, each separately, and for his own Use, as a Counsellor *only*, the Sum of Ten Thousand Pounds Sterling, without mentioning the Exchange—Sometime after they arrived, they came to a Resolution, at what Exchange the current Rupee, (a Denomination which exists only in Imagination, and is made up from other Denominations of real Pieces of Silver, as our Pound Sterling is of twenty Shillings) should be paid to them, and they agreed to receive it at two Shillings the current Rupee; that is, Ten current Rupees for the Pound Sterling, and of course, every Member did then and ever after receive at Bengal, One Hundred Thousand current Rupees annually, as equivalent to Ten Thousand Pounds, for we have no Sterling Money there.

Power in their Hands, agreed to draw together, in all Political Measures, it happened that a Clause in the same Act which gave into their Hands.

In the same Act of Parliament, the Servants of the East India Company abroad, were confined to drawing on the Company at home, for Three Hundred Thousand Pounds annually, *and no more.* And of that Sum I believe the Portion of the Bengal Presidency was limited by the Court of Directors to One Hundred Thousand Pounds.

What is it that our unspotted Triumvirate of rigid Inquisitors do, but agree amongst themselves, that the very Money they had decreed should be paid to them out of the Treasury at two Shillings the current Rupee, should also be received back into the Treasury for Bills on the Company, at the enhanced Value of two Shillings and one Penny.

A Man who takes from His Majesty's Exchequer a Guinea, and puts down twenty Shillings, robs him of Five per Cent. The Fraud in which you was concerned, Mr. Francis, amounted to Ten Pence in the Pound, on a Hundred Thousand Pounds—or Four Thousand One Hundred, Sixty-six Pounds, Thirteen Shillings

lings and Four-pence, (£4166, 13s. 4d.) Now
 for the Application.—After I had resided in
 India, eight and twenty Years, with the Com-
 pany's Permission, never once having infringed
 their general Orders, or acted contrary to their
 Bye Laws; after having paid into their Treas-
 uries at their different Settlements, as Duties on
 Fair Trade, more Money than you, Mr. Francis,
 ever received, honestly, from them, (notwith-
 standing your Allowance of Ten Thousand
 Pounds a Year for your Services) after having
 assisted to destroy their Enemies and support
 their Flag, and contributed in more Instances
 than one, to extend their Trade, I was called
 upon to equip and command Two Forty Gun
 Ships, to reinforce the King's Squadron; which
 I executed to the Satisfaction of the Admiral, as
 well as the Presidency of Madra's and Govern-
 ment of Bengal. You are influenced by the
 Malice of your Heart, contrary to your own
 double Promise of Retraction, to assure the
 Company, that the Establishment fixed for
 Captain Price, enabled him to pay his Debts,
 make a Fortune, and come to Europe, when the
 whole Sum which I did receive (and on that
 my

my brother Captain had a Claim) amounted to the Sum of Three Thousand, Six Hundred and Fifty-seven Pounds (£3657.) something less than you cheated them of, by a Dash of your Pen, and something more than one third of your annual Salary, for which you have impeded, perplexed, and confounded all their Affairs at Bengal, for six Years together.

Never did three Men exclaim more against Persecution, and uncandid Representation, than General Clavering, Colonel Monson and Mr. Francis did, and even now, when their Names are mentioned, the most uncharitable Comparisons are drawn between them, and Men, at least, as faithful Servants of the Company, as ever they were: I reverence the Maxim that directs us to speak well of the Dead, as much as any Man, and had Mr. Francis been dead, all my Injuries should have been buried in oblivion. But he is alive, and on the Ground where we are both equal, and may defend himself. As to his Colleagues, I was obliged to mention their Names, when I was reduced to give an Instance of the loose Administration of Mr. Francis and

the

the rest of the Majority, in defence of myself, against a Man who has attempted to destroy my Credit with the Company, and with my private Friends.

If the Fact which I have stated, doth not stand the severest Test of Examination, my Credit must fall,—If it doth, I can assure the Friends of the deceased Gentlemen, that it is not in Tenderness to Mr. Francis, that I do not publish to the World, a Series of Facts collected during the violent Administration of the Triumvirate, which would expose the Principles on which they acted, more clearly than hath hitherto appeared. The living Man is now my only Enemy, and I am always at his Service.

I know your Abilities and great Dexterity in the Arrangement of Words, for the Purpose of making the worse appear the better Cause.—

Much do you owe to the Nation and to the East India Company, as well as to Individuals, for the Time you have mispent, and the Paper you have wasted in entering up *unsupported Assertions,*
mysteri-

mysterious Allusions, and barbarous Insinuations against the Honor of the Company's old Servants on the Face of their Consultations; where they will for ever remain Monuments of the Disingenuity of your Disposition, and the Depravity of your Heart.

I am aware that you will say, It is a standing Order of the East India Company, that whatever Arguments may have been used by their Servants abroad in Defence of, or Dissent from, any Measure debated at the Council-Board, shall remain on their Consultations for the Information of the Court of Directors.

Without making a Question whether a chit-chat Conversation in one of the Settlements, relative to the private Concerns of an Individual, can be of Use to the Directors or not, I beg Leave to put you in Mind that that particular Order of the Company was not always attended to by Mr. Francis.

Once on a Time, when you and the two other Members of the Council who formed the Majority

Majority of the Administration in the Government of Bengal (until the Death of Colonel Monson) had it in Contemplation to send an Ambassador to the Maharatta Court, at Poonah; some Difference in Opinion arose on the Propriety of the Measure between you and one of your Friends. Much Reasoning was used, and many Observations were urged and recorded, *pro* and *con*. Both Sides grew warm. Political Friendship, the only Cement of your apparent good Understanding, proved too weak to controul the unruly Passions of Men, who privately detested each other; and you fell inadvertently into that Chain of allusive, vindictive Scurrility and Abuse of one another, which marks the whole of your Correspondence with the Company at that period, reflecting on the Governor General and former Administration. The other Member of the Majority, dreading the Consequences of a total Breach amongst yourselves, put you in Mind of a famous Scene in the Beggars Opera. Self-interest, that universal Peacemaker, stepped in very cordially to your Relief. Hands were shaken—Apologies made—and the

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whole

whole Debate struck off from the Company's Records.

Be pleased to say in what Point of View your very candid and charitable Remarks on the personal Intentions and private Concerns of Captain Price, could convey more useful Information to the Court of Directors, than your very warm and very honest Opinion of each other's Principles and secret Motives of Action would have done, had you permitted those Minutes to have remained on Record, as you have done such as related to me.—At all Events, if Conveniency could induce you to obliterate Remarks that would have dishonoured yourself, common Prudence, and some Regard to your own Promise, ought to have operated so as to have erased the other: but that you should meddle at all with the private Misfortunes of an Individual, implies great Want of Charity—more particularly as it carries with it a convincing Proof of your having forgot your own.—Excuse me, Sir, for putting you in Remembrance, that you have been yourself in a State of Bankruptcy; and that, had not the
Directors

Directors of the East India Company supplied you with Money to pay your Debts, you could not have benefited of your Parliamentary Appointment in their Service.

Having now fully proved, to the Satisfaction, I hope, of every impartial Person, that you have asserted Falsehoods, retracted them, and then re-asserted them; I have done with you, on my own part, and the World will judge, what Credit is due to the Assertions of a Man of such a Character.—But if you wish to have your Publick Conduct laid before the World, I fancy you will not be disappointed in this Respect; for there is great Store of rich Materials in the Company's Records, to which to apply: and no scanty Pittance of Biographical Anecdote to to embellish the digressive Parts of such a Work.—How a Man, so every Way open to Attack, and at the same Time so superlatively endowed with Political Cunning as Mr. Francis is well-known to be, should be so much off his Guard, as to justify the Compilation of so curious a Piece of Asiatic History, is not easy to say.—Whether I shall be at the Trouble to digest the
Materlais

Materials into Form, and give them, a Pennyworth, to the Public, will depend on Circumstances.——As for this little Piece, it has been drawn up on a self-defensive Principle, and to satisfy some interested Individuals, who seem much inclined to believe the idle Stories recorded, if not invented, by Mr. Francis, against me.

As to the Proprietors of East India Stock, and the Directors of the Company's Affairs, they have before them innumerable Instances of his Manner of calumniating their old and superior Servants, by insidious Implication, constantly repeated, but never proved: and I trust, that nothing, he or his Scribes can say of me, will prove a Bar to my Hopes of some Employment in their Service.

I have cautiously avoided entering into Matters relative to his Conduct in private Life—though I feel myself warranted to say, that he has, for some Years past, been considered at Bengal as a Disturber of the Peace of private Families, and a Pest to Society.

If the Language I have used is thought to be too pointed or severe; I can only say, that since I have heard that the personal Reflections used by Mr. Francis in his Minutes at Bengal (and which he had retracted) remained still on the Company's Records at the India-House; I felt in my Mind a Mixture of Resentment, Indignation, and Contempt, for a Man capable of so much Duplicity of Conduct.

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Your humble Servant,

JOSEPH PRICE.

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London, No. 1, Corbet-Court,

Gracechurch-Street.

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